

to life and his elevation to the rank of presiding deity in the Horas, the world of the dead. When Horus the younger, the son of

Osiris and Isis, was grown to man's estate, the ghost of his father appeared to him and urged him, like another Hamlet, to avenge the foul unnatural murder upon his wicked uncle. Thus encouraged, the youth attacked the miscreant. The combat was terrific and lasted many days. Horus lost an eye in the conflict and Set suffered a still more serious mutilation. At last Thoth parted the combatants and healed their wounds ; the eye of Horus restored by spitting on it. According to one account the great battle was fought on the twenty-sixth day of the month of Thoth. Foiled in open war, the artful uncle now took the law of his virtuous nephew. He brought a suit of bastardy against Horus, hoping thus to rob him of his inheritance and to get possession of it himself; nay, not content with having murdered his good brother, the unnatural Set carried his rancour even beyond the grave by accusing the dead Osiris of certain high crimes and misdemeanours. The case was tried before the supreme court of the gods in the great hall at Heliopolis. Thoth, the god of wisdom, pleaded the cause of Osiris, and the august judges decided that " the word of Osiris was true." Moreover, they pronounced Horus to be the true-begotten son of his father. So that prince assumed the crown and mounted the throne of the lamented Osiris. However, according to another and perhaps later version of the story, the victory of Horus over his uncle was by no means so decisive, and their

struggles  
 ended in a compromise, by which Horus reigned over  
 the  
 Delta, while Set became king of the upper valley of  
 the Nile  
 from near Memphis to the first cataract. Be that as it  
 may,  
 with the accession of Horus began for the Egyptians  
 the  
 modern period of the world, for on his throne all the  
 kings  
 of Egypt sat as his successors.<sup>1</sup>

These legends of a contest for the throne  
 of Egypt

<sup>1</sup> Plutarch, *Isis et Osiris*, 19 and 55; *Ancient Egyptians*, pp.  
 214 sq. | G.  
 A. Erman, *Aegypten- und ägyptisches* Maspero, *Histoire ancienne des*  
*Peuples*  
*Leçon im Altertum* ^ p. 368 ; id., *Die de F Orient Classique* ^  
 I. 176-178 ;  
*ägyptische Religion* \* pp. 41 sq. | A. E. A. Wallis Budge, *Osiris*  
*and the*  
*Wiedemann, Die Religion der alten Egyptian Resurrection* ^ i. 62  
 sq. 64,  
*Ägypter*, p. 114; />/. , *Religion of the* 89 j ^ . , 309 ^ \* 7 .  
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